

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 00036 051224Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 /072 W
-----074376 051226Z /11

R 051111Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2239
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: FI, UR
SUBJECT: NO OFFICIAL FINNISH COMMEMORATION OF ANNIVERSARY OF
LENIN DECREE RECOGNIZING FINNISH INDEPENDENCE; OFFICIAL SOVIET
DELEGATION RECEIVED LITTLE ATTENTION

REF: (A) 77 HELSINKI 2679, (B) 77 HELSINKI 3009,

1. SUMMARY: THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LENIN'S SIGNING THE
DECREE RECOGNIZING FINNISH INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET
UNION PASSED DECEMBER 31 WITHOUT ANY OFFICIAL
FINNISH COMMEMORATION OF THE EVENT. A SOVIET DELEGATION
HEADED BY SOVIET FIRST DEPUTY PREMIER NIKOLAI A. TIKHONOV
WAS IN HELSINKI DECEMBER 29-31, APPARENTLY TO MARK THE
OCCASION; TIKHONOV HAD TO CONTENT HIMSELF WITH A
QUASI-OFFICIAL CEREMONY IN WHICH HE RECEIVED FROM THE FINNISH
PEACE DEFENDERS AN ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS PRAISING FINNISH/
SOVIET RELATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN SIGNED BY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS
OF FINNS. PRESIDENT KEKKONEN RECEIVED TIKHONOV ON
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DECEMBER 31, BUT NO STATEMENTS WERE MADE NOR ANY
REFERENCES TO THE ANNIVERSARY DATE OF LENIN'S DECREE
MENTIONED. EXCEPT FOR THE COMMUNIST PRESS, NEWS COVERAGE
OF THE TIKHONOV VISIT WAS NEGLIGIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE BASIS OF THE RATHER HEAVY EMPHASIS GIVEN TO
THE ROLE OF LENIN IN FINLAND'S ACHIEVING OF INDEPENDENCE

WHICH HAD MARKED FINNISH OBSERVANCES OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOVIET OCTOBER REVOLUTION, THE EMBASSY HAD ANTICIPATED THAT SPECIAL ATTENTION WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LENIN'S SIGNING THE FINNISH INDEPENDENCE DECREE (REFTEL A). THE ANTICIPATED COMMEMORATIONS FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT GAVE NO OFFICIAL RECOGNITION TO THE ANNIVERSARY DATE NOR, TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE EMBASSY, DID ANY MEMBER OF THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT SO MUCH AS REFER TO THE LENIN DECREE.

3. AN OFFICIAL SOVIET DELEGATION HEADED BY SOVIET FIRST DEPUTY PREMIER NIKOLAI TIKHONOV WAS IN FINLAND DECEMBER 28-31, OSTENSIBLY TO OBSERVE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LENIN DECREE. HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF AN OFFICIAL FINNISH GOVERNMENT COMMEMORATION OF THE EVENT, THE PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE TIKHONOV VISIT WAS MUTED. THE PRINCIPAL EVENT OF HIS VISIT WAS A DECEMBER 30 QUASI OFFICIAL PUBLIC CEREMONY HELD AT THE COMMUNIST PARTY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING, THE HOUSE OF CULTURE. IN THE CEREMONIES, DEPUTY PREMIER TIKHONOV AND FINNISH PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA RECEIVED A PRESENTATION FROM THE FINNISH PEACE DEFENDERS LINKING THE PRAISING THE 60-YEAR ANNIVERSARIES OF FINNISH INDEPENDENCE AND OF THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION. THE SO-CALLED PEACE ADDRESS WAS SIGNED BY SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND FINNISH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CITIZENS, AND WAS DELIVERED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PEACE DEFENDERS, CENTER PARTY FIGURE DR. AHTI KARJALAINEN. AT THE CEREMONY, THE SECON MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SKDL MEMBER KALEVI KIVISTO, PRESENTED REMARKS ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND. THERE WAS NO MENTION IN PRESS ACCOUNTS THAT KIVISTO MADE ANY REFERENCE TO THE LENIN DECREE. DURING HIS OWN REMARKS, TIKHONOV EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE TO THE FINNISH PEOPLE FOR THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE ROLE OF LENIN IN FINLAND'S OBTAINING OF INDEPENDENCE.

4. PRESIDENT KEKKONEN DID NOT ATTEND THE CELEBRATION; THE SAME EVENING HE WAS ADDRESSING A CONSERVATIVE PARTY ELECTION RALLY IN LAHTI. HOWEVER, PRESIDENT KEKKONEN, THE NEXT DAY, DECEMBER 31, DID RECEIVE DEPUTY PREMIER TIKHONOV AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN, A LUNCH WAS OFFERED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE AT WHICH PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE TIKHONOV DELEGATION RETURNED TO MOSCOW THE AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER 31.

5. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE COMMUNIST PAPERS, NEWS
COVERAGE OF THE TIKHONOV VISIT WAS SPARSE AND GENERALLY
BURIED IN THE MIDDLE PAGES OF THE NEWSPAPERS. THE GENERAL
MOOD OF APATHY AND SATIATION WITH ANNIVERSARIES WHICH
APPEARED TO GREET THE TIKHONOV VISIT WAS PERHAPS BEST SUMMED
UP BY THE HELSINGIN SANOMAT PAGE 6 LEAD TO ITS BRIEF
ARTICLE ON THE VISIT: "CELEBRATION YEAR ENDS."

RIDGWAY

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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